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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Increase population – SA depends on it

South Australia's declining share of the national population is arguably the most important issue facing the state.

The recent Australian Bureau of Statistics figures (*The Advertiser*, 21/9/05), which show that SA continues to lose people to other states, underline the critical and deep-seated nature of this problem.

Our negative population trends have formed over the past four decades and will not be turned around overnight. However, a lot of work is being done to ensure the state has a sustainable population for the future.

It is worth noting that the Federal Government and State Government are co-operating on this issue, and initiatives like the new visa program, which encourages business migrants to settle in regional areas, including Adelaide, are starting to see results.

Largely due to this scheme, SA attracted 4950 business migrants in 2004 – a 139 percent increase on the previous year.

However, we need to do more. The recent ABS statistics show there is no room for complacency when it comes to population – the sustainability of our cities and towns and the survival of our state depends on it.

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